

Happiness Pony

I have come to wound the autumnal city.

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CLASSIFIED ADS

BOOKS, YIDDISH+ENGLISH

Not In The Same Breath by Zackary Sholem Berger: 1/3 Yiddish, 1/3 English, 2/3 Pretty Pictures. bit.ly/NITSBAmaزون

Cat In The Hat and Curious George in Yiddish. yiddishcat.com

MUGS, TIKI

Scallywag Ceramics. Exotic curiosities. scallywagceramics.com

Saint Christina the Astonishing

Christina of Liège was a peasant shepherd born in Belgium in 1150. She died in her early 20s. In the middle of the funeral service, she flew from her coffin into the rafters of the church. When she was persuaded to come down, she told of her experiences in the afterlife. She said she'd been given the opportunity to return to earth to suffer on behalf of those in Purgatory and inspire the living to lives of holiness. She went on to spend the next 50 years in exceptional craziness, begging on the street and living in treetops, jumping in fires and freezing rivers, being whirled around millwheels and bitten by dogs, ripped by thorns and escaping capture by those bent on rescuing or destroying her. None of this caused lasting injury. She was sought out by saints and at least one cardinal. She died of natural causes in a monastery, where she was reported to be an obedient guest. In her time, many thought her insane and dangerous. Many more respected her as a holy woman, and though never officially canonized she's called "Saint Christina the Astonishing" even today. On the day of her death, July 24, people hold costume parties in her memory, instructing their guests to "wear something astonishing." (Mike Benedetti)

The Postman

REVIEWED BY SHANE CAPRA

Many critics panned the 1997 post-apocalyptic epic *The Postman*. The bloated non-acting. The overwrought faux drama. The patriotic United States Postal Service vs. a white supremacist warlord.

But this is the best movie I have ever seen.

The titular Postman is a deadbeat dad type guy. A man striving to do the bare minimum to get by in a post-apocalyptic society. He is not a rugged anti-hero. He is an awkward chump. He pretends to be a postman to put food in his belly and only accidentally inspires some kid to start an antifascist mail delivery syndicate. He then attempts to lay around doing nothing, but is foiled when a woman burns his house down. When he discovers the antifascist postal service, he disbands it to search for a fabled utopian Margaritaville where he can live out his moocher dreams. Then, at the last possible moment, Tom Petty convinces him to defeat fascism. Overall this movie has changed my life.

The Blue Angel

The Blue Sea Slug, or "Blue Angel," is an inch-long mollusk that drifts upside down in the open sea, its gray back camouflaging it against creatures below it, and its blue belly disguising it from above. The tiny creature's prey? The 160-ft. long Portuguese Man o' War jellyfish. The slug latches on and consumes not only nutrients but also stinger cells, which it stores in its own tentacles for protection. (Written by Jen Burt. Image by Taro Taylor, Creative Commons Attribution license.)



TRACY O'CONNELL

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Photo of the Fisher Boy from the September 1915 issue of *The Worcester Magazine*.

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Happiness Pony is a free monthly newspaper published in Worcester, Massachusetts. This issue was edited by Shane Capra, Jen Burt, & Mike Benedetti. Masthead by Aiden Duffy from a 1775 issue of the *Massachusetts Spy*.
editor@happinesspony.com

SO many wonderful things happened to Dorothy Ann on the night when she took her first trip with the Swan, that there wasn't enough room to tell them all in that story. One of the most important occurred as she was passing over the lake on her way home when she looked down, and saw a boy fishing in the lily pond. She recognized him right away, for she had often seen him during the day time in the big open place before the railway station, known as Washington Square. There he stands on a watering trough all day, a slender figure amid the great wagons and trucks which keep rolling by him on every side. In his hand he holds a fishing rod, as if he were baiting his hook. Dorothy Ann always waves to him when she passes through the square in a trolley car.

But on the night when she flew over the lake on the Swan's back he answered her wave for the first time. She was delighted, for he had never seemed to notice her before, and she asked the Swan to fly down so that she could get better acquainted with him.

"We haven't time to-night," said the Swan; "but some other time I'll bring you on purpose to meet him."

"Does he go fishing every night?" she asked.

"Of course. That is why he spends every day getting ready."

All this happened on the first night when Dorothy Ann went to ride with the Swan. So when she was awakened about half past eleven a week later by a noise at the window, she was not at all surprised to see his beak pecking at the screen.

"Want to go see the Fisher Boy?" he asked.

It was not many minutes before Dorothy Ann was cuddling into the white feathery hollow between the Swan's wings, just as she had done on that first ride. Since then she had ridden with him often during the daytime at Elm Park, so they now felt quite like old friends.

As they flew down over the hill the Swan gradually descended and when they came to the edge of the lake, he glided off upon the water so smoothly that he did not make even a splash. Up the lake he swam and Dorothy Ann thought the motion more pleasant, though not so exciting, as flying. Pretty soon they came to the little bridge under which she had once gone in a canoe with her father. Under it the Swan went and then under the second and still smaller bridge, into the lily pond. On a rock in the center of the pond stood the Fisher Boy, his line in hand as if on the point of beginning to fish.

"Ah, ha! Cloud Bird, so you brought Dorothy Ann with you to-night to see the fun," he said, as they silently glided toward him.

"Will it really be fun?" asked Dorothy Ann doubtfully. "I am not very fond of fishing. The fish are so cold and clammy and they wriggle so when you take them off the hook."

"Not the kind I catch," said the boy laughing. "Wait and see."

Dorothy Ann looked around her. Everywhere were lily pads and the closed lilies.

"I wish some of the lilies were open, just one or two so I could see how they look at night," she said wistfully.

"The fairies are inside asleep," said the Boy. "They will come out at midnight. See, they are opening the shutters now."

As he spoke a distant clock struck twelve. All around her Dorothy Ann saw the blossoms opening, at first slowly, then quickly, as if the fairies were pushing out the shutters of their houses from the inside. From each white petal sprang a tiny fairy until the whole pond was sparkling



with the glitter of their wings. They varied in height from the length of Dorothy Ann's thumb to that of her middle finger, but each, down to the very tiniest, was perfectly formed. At first she thought they were white, but as they turned she could see every color in their iridescent wings and gauzy draperies. Then from the center of each blossom rose a fairy far more beautiful than the others, dressed in deep yellow, with shining wings as bright as sunbeams in the centers of pond lilies.

In and out among them the Swan went, Dorothy Ann watching in delight the lovely little creatures. Then a soft

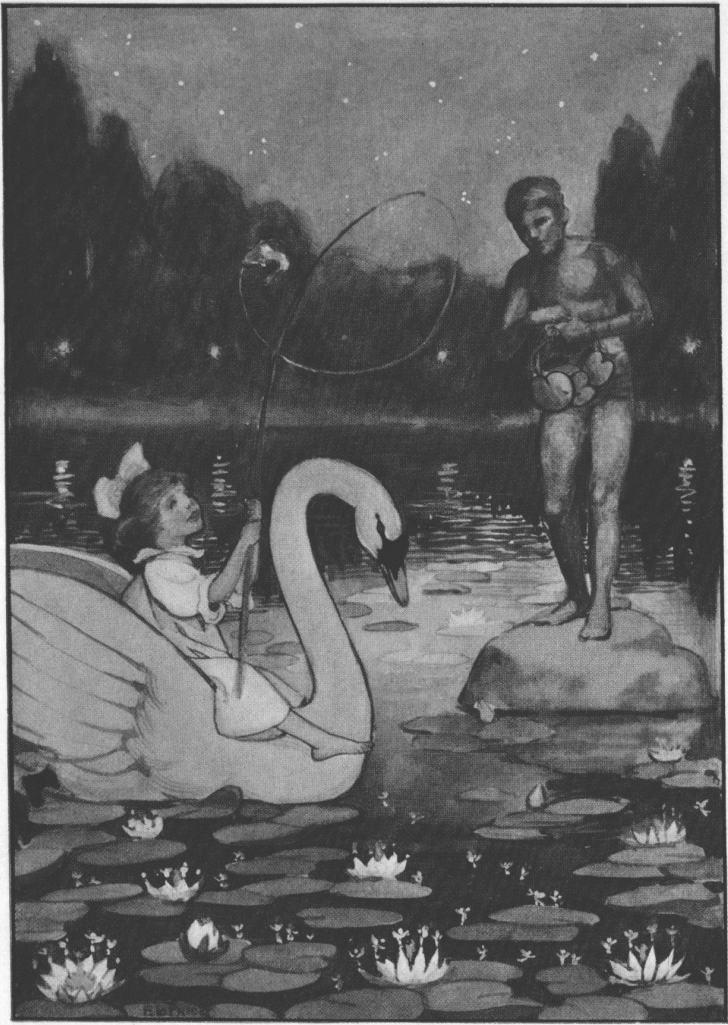
deep rich blue, gleaming yellow, glowing purple, and sometimes all glorious colors blended into each other. As he caught them he dropped them into a basket beside him which was made of lily pads fastened together, with a lily stem over the top for a handle. Dorothy Ann looked into the basket a trifle timidly.

"Touch them," said the Boy, "they don't feel like other fish."

She put her hands into the basket.

"Why, I can't feel them at all," she said; "except that they are as light as air and deliciously cool."

"That is because they are Fairy Fish," said the Boy.



Out of the water he was even more beautiful than in it.

breeze came up, blowing gently through the trees and playing a sweet melody among the pond lilies. With the first notes, each white fairy turned toward the golden one in the center, bowing low. Then in a flash all were off, dancing the grand right and left and passing lightly at each step from one petal tip to the next.

"It is the fairy ball," whispered the Swan.

As the little creatures danced in and out, the reflections in the water became a whirl of delicate colors, like a rainbow running riot. The music grew deeper and stronger, the fairies danced faster and faster, and the air as well as the water was brilliant with color. As Dorothy Ann watched she was that they were tossing some bright colored things—she could not tell what—from their hands. Down these things fell into the water and swam off.

"See how the Fisher Boy is working now," said the Swan.

Dorothy Ann looked around and there beside her he stood, catching fish as fast as he could. And such fish they were as she had never dreamed of, pale pink,

"What are you going to do with them?" she asked wonderingly.

"I am going to take them back to Washington Square. They are not really fish at all, as you understand the world, for fairy fish are wishes. I take them back for the travelers, who are my especial friends, and whom I watch all day long as they pass in and out of the station on their way to and from the city. For each one I have a fairy wish. The air of Washington Square is full of them, but you can't see them in the day-time. That is why I must go fishing every night and must spend all day getting ready."

"But how do you know which wishes are for which people?"

"I can tell that by the colors. This deep blue one is for a little boy who is to start for the sea-shore tomorrow. His one great wish is to learn to swim. It takes its color from the ocean. The pink one is for a girl who is going on her first house party. It is just the color of her new evening dress,—rather a sentimental shade, I think. That dull brown fish is for a little girl who is coming to visit her aunt. Her

uncle keeps a drug store and her idea of earthly bliss is to have all the chocolate ice cream sodas she wants. I think she will get them, too."

"Oh, what is that pretty rose and gold one?"

"That is for a young man who is going to a summer sketch class. He wants to be a great artist some day. The fish means inspiration and takes its color from the sunset. This bright green one is for a little lame boy who has never been outside the city in his life. He is to be taken to the country where he can see the trees and grass and flowers for two whole weeks."

"And will all the wishes come true?"

"Of course. Fairy wishes always come true."

Just then Dorothy Ann caught sight of a fish that was different from all the rest. It was much more beautiful and of all the colors of the rainbow.

"Hello, what's that?" said the Boy, spying him at the same time. "He isn't a traveler's wish and I don't see how he ever got in here. I must catch him."

He cast his line, but the fish was not to be caught so easily. Every time the boy thought he had him, the fish would shake himself off the line and escape, frisking away as if in sport.

"Here, you try it," said the Boy, handing the rod to Dorothy Ann; "I can't seem to get him."

So Dorothy Ann took the rod, cast the line into the water, and, sitting right there on the Swan's back, tried to land the fish. In a minute he bit. Quickly she lifted the rod and tossed him right into her lap. Out of the water he was even more beautiful than in it. The Boy looked at him curiously.

"I never saw a fish like that, and I don't know quite what to make of him," he said, taking him up to toss him into the basket. But the fish slipped out of his fingers, back into Dorothy Ann's lap. Three times the Boy tried to take him, but each time the fish slipped back. Dorothy Ann couldn't help laughing at the two—the Boy looked so amazed and the fish so mischievous.

"You'd better stop trying to take him for yourself," advised the Swan. "You wouldn't know what to do with him if you succeeded, and I should think you could see that he is intended for Dorothy Ann."

"Of course," said the Boy, "that is what he is,—a stay-at-home wish for a stay-at-home person. I haven't seen one for so long I had forgotten what they looked like. It's a wish that will bring you a good time through the rest of the summer."

"For me," cried Dorothy Ann, taking the lovely thing up in her hands. "Can I carry him home with me?"

"Yes, but you may not be able to see him in the day time, when every fairy-like thing is in hiding."

"But I'll know he is there, because fairy wishes can never be lost," said Dorothy Ann.

From The Cloud Bird (1916) by Margaret C. Getchell, with illustrations by Edith Ballinger Price. This book is in the public domain.

The Fisher Boy, or "Chamberlain Fountain," was created by Andrew O'Connor. The Boy's fishing rod was stolen soon after his 1915 debut. In the 1940s the fountain began to cause traffic problems, and the statue was moved to Elm Park in 1956. It stands on the Elm Street side of the park.

